THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) and (b) Weathering depositions of aerosols, particulates, carbonaceous matter and pollutants particularly sulphurdioxide and oxides of nitrogen are causing damage to the Taj Mahal. The sources of the main pollutants are Mathura Refinery, foundries, other industrial and domestic activities and automobiles.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to protect the Taj Mahal from pollutants include the following :—

(i) A trapezium surrounding the Taj Mahal has been demarcated. No new polluting industry is allowed to be set up in this area.

(ii) There is a ban on the use of furnace oil and diesel generators in industries in Agra. The foundries are not permitted to operate during winter nights.

(iii) A continuous sulphur dioxide monitoring station has been maintained at the Taj Mahal from January, 1991 to obtain the trend of sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen concentrations in the ambient air.

(iv) The Mathura Refinery is continuously monitoring the ambient air quality at Mathura and its adjacent areas since the inception of the refinery.

(v) Two coal based thermal power plants in Agra had been closed down in 1981.

(vi) Agra railway marshalling station yard has been dieselised.

(vii) A network of ambient air quality monitoring stations has been set up and operated in Agra by the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board.

(viii) An Air Environmental Management Plant has been evolved. This plan would include minimising the impact of different polluting factors in the identified receptors particularly the Taj Mahal.

(ix) A project has been awarded to the NEERI, Nagpur to assess the pollution load in the existing Agra-Mathura trapezium region to determine its impact on the Taj Mahal and to redefine the coordinates of the trapezium.

(x) The Forest Department of Govenment of Uttar Pradesh has created a green belt around the Taj Mahal by planting of trees on available government land.

(xi) The Archeological Survey of India is constantly monitoring the ambient air quality including sulphur dioxide, suspended particulate matter and other pollutants as well as meteorological data around Taj Mahal. Besides periodical chemical treatment and preservation is being carried in phases.

Workshop on Support to Tibet

3857. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a three day workshop on 'Support to Tibet' at Dharamshala was held;

(b) if so, what were the aims and objects of this workshop;

(c) what were the discussions held;

(d) whether any recommendations have been made in the workshop; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED) : (a) to (e) Government of India have seen news reports regarding the workshop which was organised in Dharamshala by some people in their private capacities.

According to news reports, the workshop, inter alia, urged the Government of India and the international community to 'come out openly' in support of the cause of the Tibetan people.

The workshop reportedly decided to organise in 1993 a festival of films on Tibet, a convention of lawyers, media persons on environmental degradation in Tibet and its consequences for India, etc.

Ganga Action Plan

3858. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what have been the targets fixed under the Ganga Action Plan and achievements made so far;

(b) whether Government have launched Yamuna Action Plan;

(c) if so, the details of the plan;

(d) whether there are proposals to launch similar plan to clear the other major rivers; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The Ganga Action Plan envisages abatement of pollution of the river Ganga to improve its water quality. To achieve the same, 261 schemes for interception and diversion of domestic sewage, sewage treatment, low cost sanitation, electric/improved wood crematoria, river front facilities and others were taken up in 25 Class-I towns situated along the Ganga in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. It was targetted to intercept, divert and treat 873 million litres per day (mld) waste water out of an estimated 1340 mld waste water being generated from these towns. With the completion of 208 schemes, 543 million litres per day (mld) of waste water is being intercepted and diverted and a capacity to treat 297 mld of waste water has been created. The water quality in terms of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) at all the 27 monitoring stations under Ganga Action Plan have shown discernible improvement and has consistently been above the permissible limits. In respect of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), the levels meet the desired standards at all these monitoring stations except at Kanpur and sometimes at Varanasi (bank side) where the trend has been found to be erratic.

(b) and (c) A scheme of pollution abatement of river Yamuna called Yamuna Action Plan has been launched by the Government. Under this plan, work on pollution abatement have commenced in 6 towns of Haryana and 8 towns of Uttar Pradesh besides Delhi. The approved cost of the project is Rs. 357 crores. The cost is to be shared equally between the Centre and the concerned State Governments

(d) and (e) A programme for pollution abatement of identified polluted stretches in 17 major national rivers to be called the "National River Action Plan" is under consideration of the Government. The details in this regard are being worked out.

Smuggling of Sandalwood

3859. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated quantity and value of Sandalwood stolen/smuggled during the last three years, year-wise from the sandal growing areas of the country; and

(b) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The Quantity and value of Sandalwood stolen/ smuggled and subsequently seized during the last three years is given in statement (see below).

(b)(i) Export-Import Policy 1992—97 has imposed complete ban on export of sandalwood in any form but excluding fully finished handicrapts made out of sandalwood and machine finished Sandalwood Products.

(ii) Contractor system has been stopped and harvesting of Sandalwood is done through Government agencies only.

(iii) Intensive patrolling along borders, Coordination with B.S.F. and Customs departments and involvement of other people are also some of the steps to check incidence of theft/smuggling of sandalwoods.

STATEMENT

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Sandalwood stolen (in Kgs)			Value (Rs. in lakhs)		
		1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
1.	Andhra Pradesh	6992.403	1859.005	638.025	5,09,645	1,33,316.50	8.212
2.	Karnataka	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	49.350	227.23	N.A.
3.	Tamil Nadu	7,34,320	603,368	N.A.	1147.08	1048.26	N.A.
4.	Kerala	1990	1991	1992	1990	1991	1992
		4840	660	1400	4,84,000	272,000	1,70,000